

**MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN ENTERTAINMENT & CONVENTION  
AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – JUNE 12, 2024**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Entertainment & Convention Authority (“MECA”), a Nebraska nonprofit corporation, was called to order by Chairwoman Diane Duren at 1:11 p.m. on Wednesday, June 12, 2024.

**Roll Call:**

Present were: Chairwoman Diane Duren, Ms. Susie Buffett, Mr. Ben Gray, Mr. Tom Kelley, and Mr. Jay Noddle.

**Proof of Publication:**

Notice of the meeting was published in *The Daily Record* on June 5, 2024, and in the *Omaha World-Herald* on June 5, 2024.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Gray moved for approval of the minutes of the May 15, 2024, MECA Board Meeting, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**President/CEO Report:**

Mr. Roger Dixon stated that the Big Ten Baseball Tournament went off well, and offered his appreciation to the staff whose hard work made it a success.

Discussions continue with the Omaha Chamber and the City of Omaha on how to campaign for the vote on the bond package slated for November. The group reached out to Lance Fritz who has agreed to chair the committee; and Ms. Linda Lovgren with Emspace has been contacted concerning the marketing aspect of it. The committee hopes to have everything ready to go by the end of the month.

Mr. Noddle added that he has had discussions with the Omaha Chamber and with Mr. Fritz about securing funds for the bond package. Several commitments have been received and there are more potential prospects to contact. There are requests on behalf of the funders for a detailed breakdown of what the bond proceeds will be spent on. Chairwoman Duren noted that the document is close to completion and suggested that the committee prepare a work management plan.

**Other Business:**

**Corporate Sales & Marketing Update**

Mr. Tom O’Gorman reported that MECA hosted a very successful Big Ten Baseball Tournament again this year. The Big Ten Commissioner was in attendance for two days and was pleased about MECA’s execution of the event.

Although the concert season seems to be slowing down right now, there will be a couple of additional announcements coming up in later June and July. As soon as the Men's College World Series (MCWS) is over, it will be busy for July and August at CHI Health Center Omaha (CHIHCO).

The new courtside lounge is closer to being named, as a potential client has been in the arena to view the area on multiple occasions.

### **Operations & IT Update**

Mr. Kevin Raymond stated that the operations team is completely focused on the stadium for Men's College World Series (MCWS). The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) arrived in Omaha on Monday. The stadium will open to the public tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. for practice, and Game 1 between Virginia and North Carolina will be played on Friday at 1:00 p.m.

A timeline is being developed for the numerous projects at CHIHCO. In the past, the months of July and August were used as project months since it was typically a slower time of year; however, this is no longer the case. The biggest challenge will be working around events and finding time when the facility is available. There are several approvals for the Board today and more to come in the next couple of months.

### **Levy Food & Beverage Update**

Ms. Chris Van Dorn reported another busy month in May with 27 events in 45 event days between the two buildings. The ballpark had a tremendous month hosting the Big Ten Baseball Tournament. Despite the slow start to the tournament with rain delays pushing back the start of games, sales came within 2.5% of last year's record-breaking tournament. Levy also had another tremendous Berkshire Hathaway Annual Meeting at CHI Health Center Omaha which brought an increase of 5% over last year's revenues.

Despite the fact that no individual records were set for the month of May, the lead for the highest year to date (YTD) campus-wide sales is being maintained, beating last year's YTD record as of the end of May by just over 20%. Levy is also maintaining a positive sales impact to budget of 43%.

The bottom line continues to remain very strong as well. The campus wide YTD PBITDAR is up 79.7% to budget with a flowthrough of 70.8% based on the additional revenues.

The media tasting held earlier this morning was a big hit. Levy showcased the following 12 new concession items along with some sweet treats to round out lunch: Stealing Home Colossal LOADED Pretzel, The Big Kahuna Burger, Triple Play Pork Sandwich, Walk-off Burger, Dinger Dog, Footlong Frank and Bean Dog, Mediterranean Loaded Bratwurst, Crispy Chicken Club, Moon-Shot Fries, Ancho Chicken Quesadilla, Everything Toasted Turkey Bagel and the Grilled Chicken Shawarma Gyro.

For the remainder of today, Levy will be putting finishing touches on the stands that are open tomorrow for Opening Ceremonies and then will be ready to open the gates at all locations on Friday morning for Game 1 of the Series.

Finally, as a follow-up to last month's update on the partnership with Saving Grace, Levy's Culinary Team is working with Ms. Engdahl to highlight the work being done during the Series to get the extra food that wasn't used into the hands of those in the community. The date is set for June 17 and media partners will be available to capture the process of the food leaving the ballpark and arriving at the Sienna Francis house where the donated items will be served that same day.

### **Public Relations Update**

Ms. Kristyna Engdahl reported that another full house was hosted for the annual Men's College World Series press conference and media menu tasting this morning, where Mr. Dixon delivered relevant information regarding stadium entry and safety. Additionally, Levy provided samples of their exciting menu items for this year to many rave reviews. It's an opportunity that the media look forward to each year.

Ms. Engdahl is working with the Omaha Police Department (OPD) to help facilitate their annual MCWS safety press conference tomorrow, which will take place outside of the stadium at 10:00 a.m.

Along with a traditional media reminder, several 'know before you go' videos have been produced for social media platforms to cover topics such as parking, weather, and guest services accessibility.

On Friday, for the first time in a year, KETV will broadcast the entirety of their First News newscast from Charles Schwab Field in promotion of the Men's College World Series. Along with a live presence throughout the ballpark, they will welcome several live interviews and guest segments, including CWS of Omaha, Inc. and Visit Omaha, just to name a few.

Additionally, as discussed during the last Board meeting, Ms. Engdahl has collaborated with Saving Grace Perishable Food Rescue to facilitate a media opportunity in promotion of their efforts in conjunction with the Levy, Charles Schwab Field Omaha and the MCWS. Next week, the media is invited to see how carefully Levy packages perishable food up, the efforts to coordinate pickup with Saving Grace and then the same day delivery process at a nearby community organization, in this case the Siena Francis House. Interviews will be available with representatives from Levy, Saving Grace and Siena Francis House to help illustrate this event's positive impact on their recipients.

Dating back to May, MECA enjoyed favorable press coverage of the Pro Volleyball Federation's semi-finals and championship games. Media monitoring last month totaled almost 1,300 mentions of CHI Health Center Omaha, reaching approximately 3.2 billion people for a total publicity value of \$29 million. Significant outlet pickup included MSN.com and CNBC.com with coverage of the annual Berkshire Hathaway Shareholders weekend and numerous concert announcements.

Mr. Ben Gray added that last week, the Empowerment Network held its three-day ‘Rebuilding the Village’ Conference at the CHI Health Center Omaha. The dinner was well attended, and Levy did a tremendous job. In attendance were dignitaries from 17 cities who came to Omaha with the intent of looking at a violence prevention model. As a result, they were also able to go to The RiverFront and watch the interaction of security staff, YouTurn, and the Omaha Police Department (OPD). The group reported being impressed and amazed at the collaboration between the groups along with being impressed and surprised about what is happening in Omaha. There are many people who will take their experience back and tell their friends to go visit the City of Omaha.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **Internal Governance Committee**

Mr. Tom Kelley reported that the Internal Governance Committee met on Friday, June 7, 2024. In attendance were Ms. Diane Duren, Mr. Tom Kelley, Mr. Roger Dixon, Mr. Bob Freeman, and Ms. Diane Mills.

The Committee reviewed the April 2024 Financial Statements, which were very strong and in order. After overviews from and discussions with Ms. Mills, the Committee found the report to be reasonable compared to plan and prior periods, and consistent with standard MECA accounting practices.

The Committee also reviewed a draft of the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget, which will be distributed to members of the Board today.

#### **Real Estate Committee**

Mr. Jay Noddle stated that from Cuming Street south, all construction barriers in the right-of-way have been removed and sidewalks and bike paths are open. Surface parking lots, particularly those west of 14<sup>th</sup> Street that were previously used as lay down areas, are cleared out and available for MCWS parking.

The city is in the final stages of acquiring the right-of-way needed through portions of the truck route. Design work has begun. It is likely that work will begin in the spring of 2025. MECA will need to provide a schedule of upcoming events which will restrict trucks from entering Cuming and 11<sup>th</sup> Street during events.

During the last Board meeting, Mr. Noddle’s assistance was requested on the Streetcar Maintenance Facility Agreement, specifically, what is detailed under Amendment 8. Mr. Noddle followed up several times with the city and was told that they are working on it. Mr. Dixon inquired if anything has been heard about the start date. Mr. Noddle replied that the city is working on reprioritizing the phasing. They want to get the parking lot modifications done in 2024 so work can move forward on the 2.5-acre site in the spring of 2025.

Mr. Noddle added that The RiverFront is making a huge difference to developers looking at the downtown Omaha area. It has put Omaha above many other urban areas that this region has been competing with.

**Contract Approvals:**

Chairwoman Duren indicated there are three contracts requiring Board approval.

MityLite, Inc.

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and MityLite, Inc. for the purchase of tables for use at CHI Health Center Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized on behalf of MECA to execute the Agreement following its finalization in a form reasonably approved by counsel.

Chairwoman Duren invited public and Board comment and asked for a motion.

Moved by Mr. Gray; seconded by Ms. Buffett.

Motion carried: 5-0

Johnson Hardware

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Johnson Hardware to provide labor, equipment, and materials to replace exterior metal doors at CHI Health Center Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized on behalf of MECA to execute the Agreement following its finalization in a form reasonably approved by counsel.

Chairwoman Duren invited public and Board comment and asked for a motion.

Moved by Ms. Buffett; seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

Kiewit Building Group, Inc.

**RESOLVED**, that the Agreement between MECA and Kiewit Building Group, Inc. to provide all labor, equipment, and materials to temporarily repair concrete at CHI Health Center Omaha, as more fully described on the attached summary, is hereby approved, and Roger Dixon as President/CEO is authorized on behalf of MECA to execute the Agreement following its finalization in a form reasonably approved by counsel.

Chairwoman Duren invited public and Board comment and asked for a motion.

Moved by Mr. Kelley; seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0

**Contracts Recently Awarded:**

MECA has recently awarded the following contracts:

- Sam Tell and Son, Inc. / Food Service Smallwares
- Hussey Seating Company / Seating Inspection and Maintenance
- Commercial Flooring Systems / Replace Dugout Flooring Phase I

**Next Board Meeting**

The next Board of Directors Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, July 16, 2024, at 9:15 a.m. in the MECA Board Room.

**Executive Session**

Chairwoman Duren stated the time is 1:36 p.m. and invited a Motion to enter into closed Executive Session for purposes of discussing personnel, real estate and potential claims matters.

A Motion to go into Executive Session for these specified purposes was made by Mr. Noddle, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Motion carried: 5-0.

**Adjournment**

At 2:05 p.m. a motion was made to come out of Executive Session, and to adjourn, made by Ms. Buffett, seconded by Mr. Kelley.

Motion carried: 5-0

Adjournment 2:05 p.m.